Met Office celebrates 'topping out' of supercomputer complex

12 February 2016 - The Met Office and Exeter Science Park mark a significant phase in the construction of the new home for the new supercomputer.

Built by Willmott Dixon , and designed by Atkins , the complex will house part of the new Met Office supercomputer and marks another significant milestone in its High Performance Computing (HPC) project.

The complex forms part of the region's vision of a world-leading centre of predictive environmental science at the Exeter Science Park and will help exploit UK scientific excellence, supporting collaboration and partnerships between science, business and academia.

Topping Out Ceremony - Professor Sir William Wakeham, Exeter Science Park, Steve Hindley, Local Enterprise Partnership, John Boughton, Willmott Dixon, Andy Brown, Met Office, Rob Varley, Met Office.

Met Office Chief Executive Rob Varley said: "This marks another important milestone in our supercomputer project. The first phase of which has been operational since last autumn, delivered on budget and five weeks ahead of schedule.

"This new complex will enable scientists from around the UK and the world to collaborate in assessing specific regional impacts of climate change, such as storms, droughts and heatwaves, and help countries becomes more resilient to high impact weather and other environmental risks."

Professor Sir William Wakeham, Exeter Science Park chairman said: "The opportunity to house the HPC complex on the Park is one Exeter Science Park is thrilled to support. With its world leading capabilities, we will work with the Met Office to support them in building collaborations of international significance." Adding, "it is exciting to be here today to witness the latest stage of build, not just a significant milestone for the met office and the park but for the wider region as a whole."

Neal Stephens, Managing Director of Willmott Dixon South West and Wales said: "We are delighted to be building this world class technical facility for The Met Office and this project further enhances our expertise in the construction of leading research buildings within the science and technology sector"

The 'topping out' ceremony marks the stage in construction where the building reaches its highest point, and is historically practiced to ward off evil spirits from a new building.

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